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**TO: ADMINISTRATOR AND SENIOR EXECUTIVES**  
**DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2017 7:00 AM EST**

## **Holiday Message**

In observance of the Washington's Birthday holiday, we will not publish on Monday, February 20, 2017. Service will resume on Tuesday, February 21, 2017. We wish our readers a safe and happy holiday.

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## **Administrator**

### **Senate Votes To Advance Pruitt's Nomination.**

The Hill (2/16, Carney) reports that the Pruitt's nomination will advance after the Senate voted 54-46 to advance his confirmation process. Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) was the only Republican senator to vote against Pruitt, stating, "His actions leave me with considerable doubts about whether his vision for the EPA is consistent with the agency's critical mission to protect health and the environment." E&E Daily (2/16) reports Senate Environment and Public Works Committee ranking member Tom Carper promised Democrats would use all of their allotted time to oppose Pruitt. C

The Hill (2/16, Henry) reports that "two red-state Senate Democrats," North Dakota Sen. Heidi Heitkamp and West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, said they will vote to confirm Scott Pruitt. Support from these two solidifies Pruitt's standing ahead of the confirmation vote on Friday.

Roll Call (2/16, Bowman) reports that Senate Democrats "are planning to once again stage a series of overnight speeches on the Senate floor" in opposition to Pruitt, who is still expected to be confirmed. #HoldTheFloor, a pro-Democratic hashtag about the all-nighter, was trending on Twitter, where tweets were strongly against Twitter and where some were urging Pruitt opponents to contact Sens. Heidi Heitkamp and Joe Manchin, the two Democrats who have said they plan to vote to confirm him.

The Hill (2/16, Greenwood) reports that Sen. McCain (R-Ariz.) will skip the final confirmation vote for Pruitt in order to attend a global security conference in Germany. "I have been going to this conference for 40 years, and I told them months ago that I was going," McCain told Politico.

### **EPA Employees Urging Senators To Vote Against Pruitt.**

The New York Times (2/16, Davenport) reports that EPA employees "have been calling their senators to urge them to vote on Friday against the confirmation of Scott Pruitt, President Trump's contentious nominee to run the agency, a remarkable display of activism and defiance that presages turbulent times ahead" at the agency. James Thurber of American University's Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies said, "It is rare. I can't think of any other time when people in the bureaucracy have done this." The Huffington Post (2/16) reports, "Retired and former employees of the Environmental Protection Agency are banding together in rare activism to defend colleagues still working for the agency as fears of deep layoffs, regulatory rollbacks and science suppression spread through the federal ranks." Reuters (2/16, Gardner) also provides coverage.

The Christian Science Monitor (2/16, Wood) reports that amid the turmoil, some "voices at the EPA continue to urge calm." Bipartisan Policy Center president Jason Grumet noted that the Obama administration "encouraged investment in clean energy, while trying not to 'mess up' fossil fuels." Grumet suggested that perhaps President Trump's policy would mirror that, stating, "despite encouraging drilling and pipeline construction he may not actively seek to 'mess up' the emerging green energy markets."

### **Sen. Warren Blasts Pruitt As "Attorney General For Exxon."**

The Hill (2/16, Carney) reports that Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) railed against EPA Administrator-designate Scott Pruitt on the Senate floor on Thursday, calling him the "fantasy EPA nominee" for "big polluters." She argued that during his time as attorney general of Oklahoma, he prioritized corporation, and actually served as the "attorney general for Exxon."

### **McConnell Blocks Efforts By Senate Dems To Delay Vote On Pruitt.**

The Hill (2/16, Cama) reports that Senate Democrats are frustrated that Majority Leader Mitch McConnell blocked their efforts to delay a vote on Scott Pruitt until a public records request is filled. "In my gut, I feel that these emails — the nature of these emails and the entities with whom they were sent and received — will help us understand the truth," said Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), adding, "My fear is that a number of members, especially on the other side, would be put in a very bad position, asked to vote for a nominee that they otherwise would not have supported, had they known the truth."

### **Oklahoma Judge Orders Pruitt Turn Over Emails.**

The Washington Times (2/16, Wolfgang) reports that Pruitt was ordered by an Oklahoma judge Thursday "to turn over thousands of unseen emails related to his communications with the oil-and-gas industry." The ruling came "amid a firestorm from Senate Democrats who charge that Mr. Pruitt, formerly Oklahoma's attorney general, is hiding his cozy relationship with the fossil-fuels sector." The Washington Post (2/16, Dennis) reports that District Court Judge Aletia Timmons said there had been "an abject failure to provide prompt and reasonable access to documents requested." Judge Timmons ordered the records released by Tuesday, which means "they likely won't come to light until after [Pruitt] is sworn in to his new position."

NPR (2/16) also provides coverage.

### **Negative Ad Spending Tops \$700K To Oppose Pruitt's Nomination.**

E&E Publishing (2/16) reports that over the past three months, "environmental and public interest groups spent an estimated \$784,000 on broadcast and national cable television ads in opposition to Pruitt's nomination."

## **Air**

### **Study Links Pollution To 2.7 Million Premature Births.**

Reuters (2/16, Big Story 10) reports outdoor air pollution has been linked to the premature births of 2.7 million children worldwide, according to a study in the Environment International journal. Urban areas in China and India produce 10 times the amount of pollution exposure as rural England or France, while Western sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, and the Middle East experience premature births due to desert dust exposure, researchers found. The World Health Organization linked 15 million babies to premature births each year, while pre-term birth complications lead mortality causes for children under 5 years old. Study co-author and SEI policy director Johan Kuypers said pollution transported "by the wind from other regions or even other countries" contributes nearly half of pollution levels. The Guardian (UK) (2/16, Glenza) also reports.

## **Brownfields/Superfund/Other Cleanups**

### **As Indiana Governor, Mike Pence Refused Emergency Declaration For East Chicago Lead Crisis.**

The Huffington Post (2/16, Erbentraut) reports that as Indiana's governor, Mike Pence refused to sign an emergency declaration that would have helped East Chicago address its lead contamination crisis, "suggesting the \$200,000 in assistance the state had already offered to help the city relocate affected families and administer free lead testing would suffice." Pence's successor, fellow Republican Gov. Eric Holcomb, issued that emergency declaration as one of his

first executive orders upon taking over.

### **Additional Reading.**

- **East Chicago Superfund Site Residents Get Water Donations.** Southern Illinoisan. (2/16)
- **Stakeholders Tapped For \$64 Million Burnsville Landfill Cleanup.** Minneapolis Star Tribune. (2/16, Adler)

## **Budget**

### **Budget Woes Could Impact EPA's Pesticide Program.**

Bloomberg BNA (2/17, Stecker) reports that although Congress is expected to reauthorize a key law on registering pesticides for use in 2017, it is "less certain...whether the chambers will pass a budget that adequately funds the work to put insecticides, herbicides and other pest killers on the market."

## **Climate Change**

### **NASA's Climate Updates Continue Unabated Under New Administration.**

The Washington Post (2/16, Samenow) reports that NASA "appears unfazed by the political winds swirling around the climate change issue" since President Donald Trump assumed office, continuing its regular updates on the issue through its social media accounts. While the EPA remains under a climate change "media blackout," NASA "has steadfastly shared information, even when out of step with the positions of new leadership," including "dutifully" posting new Twitter and Facebook posts every day. NASA spokesperson Steve Cole told the Post "it's business as usual" regarding the issue, and the agency in a recent statement said, "Availability of NASA Earth science data has not changed in recent months."

### **Strassel: Trump Must Back Out Of Paris Deal To Avoid Overstep By Judiciary.**

Kimberley Strassel writes in a Wall Street Journal (2/16) column that President Trump needs to follow through on his campaign promise to roll back former President Obama's climate change prevention policy by withdrawing from the Paris climate accord. Strassel writes that some in the White House are reluctant to cause international uproar or think leaving is unnecessary because the deal is not binding. In response, she warns that the judiciary could require the EPA to execute the provisions of the Paris deal, as she notes the numerous lawsuits that have cropped up in response to Trump's policies.

### **Gore Hosted Climate, Health Conference In Atlanta.**

Reuters (2/16, Malo) reports about 350 climate and health experts gathered in Atlanta for a "Climate and Health Meeting" convened by Al Gore, academics and advocates "after a similar conference by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) was abruptly called off." Gore said Wednesday "the event will fill a void." The AP (2/16, Sanz) reports officials from the CDC, EPA, NIH, and NOAA were in attendance, some on their own time.

## **International**

### **Additional Reading.**

- **India's Air Pollution Is Now As Deadly As China's.** Fox News. (2/16)

## **Other News**

### **Sources Say Trump Preparing To Sign Executive Orders To Reshape EPA.**

Reuters (2/16, Shepardson, Gardner, Valdmanis) reports that sources say President Trump is "preparing a handful of executive orders" to reshape the EPA, to be signed once a new administrator is confirmed. The sources said no details were provided about the potential orders, only that "attendees at the meeting were told Trump would sign between two and five executive orders."

**Proposed Bill To Abolish EPA Sends Signal, But Unlikely To Gain Traction.** TIME (2/16, Worland) discusses HR 861, which proposes to abolish the entire EPA. Times says the bill, which was introduced by a freshman lawmaker with just three cosponsors is "a classic example of what is known as a 'messaging bill' designed solely to get attention." Although as EPA chief Pruitt would "almost certainly try to unravel the Clean Power Plan," and might also "weaken—or shutter altogether—the EPA's enforcement office," the proposed bill does not have the power to completely unravel the entire agency.

### **EPA's Social Media Accounts Have Been Silent Since Inauguration.**

The Washington Post (2/16, Harvey) reports that the EPA "has posted nothing on its official Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts since Jan. 19, the day before President Trump was sworn into office." While an agency spokesman said "the social-media hiatus will continue until an EPA administrator has been officially confirmed," the "reasons for the freeze in the meantime remain unclear."

### **EPA Posts Copy Of Website Before Trump To The Internet.**

Vice (2/16) reports, "On Wednesday, the Environmental Protection Agency posted a mirror of its website capturing the way it looked on January 19, 2017—the day before Trump took office."

### **LCV Urges Senators To Reject Perry As DOE Secretary.**

The "Morning Energy" blog of Politico (2/16) reported the League of Conservation Voters has sent a letter to senators urging "them to reject former Texas Gov. Rick Perry's DOE nomination." The group wrote, "It is inconceivable that he is being asked to run the very agency he once irresponsibly said should be abolished." The Texas Republican may not receive "a final vote until after the President's Day recess."

**E&E: Confirmation Delays Slowing Policy Action.** E&E Publishing (2/16) reports on the slow pace of confirmations and how it is impacting the Senate's plans for energy. The "lack of confirmed heads for U.S. EPA and the Interior and Energy departments has left committee leaders without points of contact for issues that fall in their jurisdiction." Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski "pointed" to President Trump's "early action to facilitate the development of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines as a positive development." She "said that she had hoped the White House would be further along in crafting a legislative agenda," but "noted that it's been less than a month since Trump's inauguration and neither Interior secretary nominee Ryan Zinke (R-Mont.) nor former Texas Gov. Rick Perry (R), Trump's pick for Energy, has been confirmed."

E&E Publishing (2/16) reports Trump's Cabinet still is "not fully in place, and below the department secretary level the gaps are everywhere." At DOE, "there reportedly are 20 or 30 Trump people throughout the department who have arrived on short 120-day transition assignments." E&E mentions that Perry is still "waiting for his Senate confirmation." The CBS News (2/16) website reports that Perry is among the Cabinet nominees yet to be confirmed.

## **Water**

### **CDC Establishes Link Between Flint Water And Legionnaires Disease.**

MLive (MI) (2/16, Fonger) reports the CDC has "discovered the first genetic links between city water and patients diagnosed with Legionnaires' disease in Genesee County." The CDC conducted "molecular testing" in late 2016 to establish the connection between water samples and "three sputum samples from patients who were diagnosed with Legionnaires'."

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